

TN Least Change Map

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This map attempts to recreate the previous Tennessee congressional districts as closely as possible with new perfect population districts. Where changes are necessary, it tries to minimize splitting counties and cities. As a general trend, the relative percentage of state population in central Tennessee (districts 4, 5, 6, and 7) increased significantly in comparison to the districts in the west (8 and 9) and east (1 and 3). The districts in the west and east thus had to expand toward central Tennessee, creating significant deviations from the existing districts. This map does not consider any political data, but the preferred political party in each district would likely remain the same, with two safe Democratic districts (5 and 9), and the rest safely Republican.

District 9, which includes the vast majority of Memphis in the previous districts, expands eastward to include all of Memphis in this map. District 9 is also currently a majority-minority district, and the new map preserves the district's majority-minority status even though race was not a predominant factor in where the district was expanded. Given that no challenges have been successfully brought against the previous district, and this map largely expands the district along subdivision lines, it is likely free of a violation of *Shaw v. Reno*.

The voting-age black population in District 9 decreases from roughly 63% in the previous district to 59% in this map. This is expected, and inevitable to a certain degree, because District 9 must now expand into areas around Memphis that have a lower black population. Nevertheless, while District 9 plainly complies with the majority-minority voting-age population requirement for Section II of the Civil Rights Act, it does not explicitly consider the political cohesiveness requirements of Section II; no analysis was conducted on whether the cohesiveness of black and white voters in the area has changed enough to no longer require a majority-minority district.

Moving to the east, District 8 significantly expands toward central Tennessee as well due to its own decrease in relative population and the loss of territory absorbed by District 9. In the east, districts 1 and 2 expand centrally too. District 2 splits Lauden and Campbell counties even though it could likely split just one, but these splits improve the compactness issues created by District 2's previous, obscure shape. In District 5 around the Nashville area, the plan deviates from the previous district line to split just one county rather than creating splits in two. As such, although the general purpose of the map is to adhere as closely as possible to the original districts, considerations like reasonable compactness and preserving counties and cities were made at the expense of making slightly larger adjustments. Even so, many communities of interest on both the county and city-level are split, and the map still suffers from the lack of compactness of the previous districts it aims to recreate. Therefore, this map should not serve as a model for Tennessee's districts.